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Title : Need to provide Reservation to Dalit Christians.

DR. K.S. MANOJ (ALLEPPEY): Thank you Mr. Chairman Sir. I would like to draw the attention of the Government to an important matter regarding unconstitutional discrimination faced by Dalit Christians on the basis of religion.

Sir, Christians of Scheduled Caste origin of India, that is, Dalit Christians, are Scheduled Castes who accepted the religious faith of Christianity. The Dalit Christians are in the most backward position socially, educationally, economically and culturally. But they are not provided with the constitutional protection as available with the Scheduled Castes. They are deprived of reservation privileges of the Scheduled Castes. This is a sheer discrimination.

Article 14 of Constitution ensures equality before the law and Article 15 prohibits discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. Article 16 ensures equality of opportunity in the matter of public employment. Article 25 ensures freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion.

The Dalit Christians have been praying for their constitutional rights for the last 57 years. The Scheduled Castes converted to Sikhism and Buddhism were given the reservation privileges as per the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order 1950 and by further amendments in 1956 and 1990. The Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order 1950, as amended, is discriminatory and violative of article 14 and 15 of the Constitution. The social and economic disabilities of Scheduled Castes converted to Christianity continue to persist even after their conversions. Hence, the unconstitutional denial of benefits to Dalit Christians should be stopped and Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order 1950 should be amended accordingly.